CNYMUN 2026

FORGING UNITY IN A FRAGMENTED WORLD

XLIII

The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Chair Letter

Dear Delegates,
Welcome to CNYMUN 2026's United Nations Security Council! Your chairs this year are Sureeta Das and Manya Narang. You can reach them through email at 26sdas@fmschools.org and 27mnarang@fmschools.org

ABOUT THE CHAIRS:
This is Sureeta's fourth year of Model United Nations and her first as a chair, though she has staffed a crisis committee in the past. She is a senior at Fayetteville-Manlius High School and loves being active in her school clubs, including HOSA, Red Cross, the school newspaper, and S.T.E.M. Connections. Outside of school, she loves performing South Asian Dance, and she is a 2nd degree black belt.

This is Manya's third year of Model United Nations and her first as a chair, although last year she was a Crisis Staffer! She is a junior at Fayetteville-Manlius High School. Outside of MUN, she is involved in HOSA, Pep Band, Spanish Honor Society, and ECOs club. Manya enjoys seeing her favorite artists live, shopping with friends, playing a range of different instruments, and spending time with her dog.

ABOUT THE COMMITTEE:
This committee is composed of representatives from the permanent 5 members (P5), along with figures in the dispute, including foreign ministers, technology tycoons, etc. This year's topic will be set in the present, and delegates will engage in head-to-head debate to address territorial tensions amongst China, India, and Pakistan, and develop solutions in response to developments. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC), whose mandate includes maintaining international peace and security, is today facing a new challenge: collective action against cyberattacks on civilian infrastructure. In Chapter VI of the UN Charter, the UNSC is required to facilitate the easy settlement of disputes.[1] To do this, Charter VII can require binding resolutions and even collective measures, sanctions, or intervention. But, cyberwarfare involves elementary jurisdictional and procedural issues. The most important among these issues is limited attribution. Without confidence in the cause of the attacks, governments usually refrain from acting or assuming responsibility. Furthermore, veto power through the P5 members, namely China and Russia, has put all serious discussion on cyber deterrence norms on ice.

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[1] "United Nations Charter, Chapter VI: Pacific Settlement of Disputes." *United Nations*, www.un.org/en/about-us/un-charter/chapter-6.

Your topic for the United Nations Security Council at CNYMUN 2026 is the Karakorum Blackout. Bringing:
1) The Sino-Indo-Pakistani Border Dispute
2) Kashmir Conflict
3) China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

to the discussion.

ABOUT THE CONFERENCE:
Following CNYMUN tradition, the debate will be conducted in Harvard style, meaning delegates will not be allowed to use pre-written clauses and/or resolutions during the committee. Doing so will make a delegate ineligible for awards.

To be eligible for awards, delegates must submit a 1-2 page position paper via email that addresses before the start of the conference. Position papers should outline the stance of your delegation and display an understanding of the topics, demonstrating research and knowledge of your organization's goals. When deciding on awards, the chairs will look favorably upon delegates who have put significant effort towards research/preparation, collaborate with other delegates during committee sessions, stay within their nation's policies, and get their voice heard without being overbearing.

Furthermore, CNYMUN has implemented a tiered structure of committees to ensure similar experience levels for all committee members. UNSC is designated as an **advanced** committee, and we would like the debate to reflect that. In turn, the 'Best New Delegate' award will not be offered to any delegates in this committee.

Please share position papers before the conference begins. Our emails are listed below for you to contact your chairs about any research, position papers, committee inquiries, or other questions. We also encourage you to scan our lengthy delegate preparation resources and award structure on www.cnymun.org. We wish you luck and look forward to what CNYMUN 2026 will bring

Background: The Karakorum Blackout
At the end of 2025, a crippling, concerted cyberattack paralyzed power installations in three geostrategically exposed regions: Northern India (including Ladakh, Jammu, and Kashmir), Western China (largely Ngari Prefecture of Xinjiang), and Gilgit Baltistan (occupied by Pakistan).[2] The attack resulted in blackouts that impacted roughly 75 million people. Additionally, the attack caused outages in: civilian air travel, border radar grids, railway networks, and emergency response systems. Early technical assessment blamed a breach on infected firmware updates transmitted from the central SCADA (Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition) infrastructure.[3]

The 2021 UN Group of Governmental Experts (GGE) Consensus Report on Developments in the Field of ICT's reaffirmed that international law is applicable in cyberspace.[4] It asserted the principles of state responsibility, sovereignty, and due diligence. Attacks on civilian infrastructure, especially services with high stakes, can warrant the use of "jus in bello" (law in war) and "jus ad bellum" (law governing resort to force). Regardless, no enforcement systems exist in the UNSC or the broader UN system, meaning it is unable to respond directly to most cyberattacks. The place of origin of this attack was near the Karakoram Pass. This mountainous terrain sits at the border of (India-administered) Ladakh, (Pakistan-administered) Gilgit-Baltistan, and (China-administered) Aksai Chin and Ngari.

This territory is not only politically contested but digitally intertwined. The power and telecommunication transmission lines (owned by and operated by PowerGrid India, Huawei Systems, and Zulfikar Transmission) are inseparable. Past military clashes, such as the 2020 Galwan Valley India-China skirmish, demonstrate how incidents in the region have the potential to explode rapidly.[5] This is not the

first instance of these cyberattacks. For example, a Chinese-linked company successfully compromised Indian power infrastructure in 2020–2021 and caused large-scale outages in Mumbai through the ShadowPad malware platform. Recorded in the future, the Cyber Space, even though generally considered virtual, is founded on physical dependencies. The critical infrastructure is created on a mix of old and modern systems, supported by unregulated private vendors. Some old systems include railways, hydroelectric dams, and 2G networks. On the other hand, new systems include the additions of airports, metro systems, as well as telecommunication advances, including 4G/5G towers and satellite communication. In this situation, SCADA poses firmware vulnerabilities that make the spread of potential blackouts easier.

Huawei, which has already been banned from utilizing India's 5G infrastructure due to national security concerns, was at the core of the firmware update vector in W. China. PowerGrid India's employment of legacy-backed-up servers, with outdated security, eventually permitted the malware to evade detection systems. On the other hand, Zulfikar Transmission, a semi-public Pakistani utility firm, had been migrating its systems when its update servers were compromised. This supply chain "interoperability" gave the attackers (who are yet to be identified) the opportunity to execute a coordinated attack (leading to the Karakorum Blackout).

The Sino-Indo-Pakistani Border Conflict
Since the 1947 British Indian Partition, India and Pakistan have been engaged in a series of wars, cross-border skirmishes, and terrorist atrocities, all predicated mainly on the unresolved dispute over Kashmir.[6] The first of these wars erupted in October 1947. This conflict revolved around which country (India or Pakistan) would control Kashmir; the conflict ended in a stalemate and ceasefire that resulted in the Line of Control (LoC).

Then, in August of 1965, war broke out yet again (only for 17 days) for the same claimed land (Kashmir); the war ended with the Tashkent Declaration of 1966, negotiated by the Soviet Union with U.S. involvement.[7] India, suspecting Pakistan

[2] Pletcher, Kenneth. "Aksai Chin". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 31 Jul. 2025, https://www.britannica.com/place/Aksai-Chin. Accessed 4 October 2025.
[3] "SCADA: Supervisory Control and Data Acquisition." *Inductive Automation*, inductiveautomation.com/resources/article/what-is-scada.
[4] "The UN Norms of Responsible State Behavior in Cyberspace." *Australian Strategic Policy Institute*, documents.unoda.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/The-UN-norms -of-responsible-state-behaviour-in-cyberspace.pdf.
[5] "Another Clash on the India-China Border Underscores Risks of Militarization."*United States Institute of Peace*, www.usip.org/publications/2022/12/another-clash-india-china-bord er-underscores-risks-militarization.

[6] Kulik, Rebecca M.. "partition of India". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 29 Sep. 2025, https://www.britannica.com/event/Partition-of-India. Accessed 4 October 2025.
[7] Raikar, Sanat Pai. "Tashkent Declaration". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2 Jun. 2025,

had an unfair advantage, withdrew from the agreement. India withdrew after the December 1971 Indo-Pakistani War, which had been triggered by the Bangladesh Liberation movement.[8] The Indo-Pakistani War resulted in a resounding Indian victory, the formation of Bangladesh, and the capture of over 90,000 Pakistani prisoners of war (POWs). The crisis was brought to a swift end by the Shimla Agreement, in which India surrendered the territories it had gained.[9] Later in May 1999, the brief but intense Kargil War occurred when Pakistani forces took up positions in Indian-held territory within the Kargil district of the state of Jammu and Kashmir; India reclaimed its outposts within two months under increasing international pressure, most notably from the U.S.[10]

Aside from the full wars, major escalations in the region, including the Tashkent talks, India's first nuclear test (Pokhran-I in May 1974), and the protracted Siachen conflict (1984–2003), have continued to intensify militarization within the region. The Kashmir insurgency, launched in full strength in July 1989, also contributed to ongoing instability. The arms race went nuclear with retaliatory tests—India's Pokhran-II and Pakistan's Chagai tests in May 1998—prompting India to evolve a "No First Use" nuclear doctrine.[11]

Greater tensions arose in the early 2000s with a variety of regular violent episodes. For example, the 2001 Indian Parliament terrorist attack leading to a 2001–2002 military stand-off, which was settled by diplomacy. Additionally, terrorist attacks sustained the heat from the February 2007 Samjhauta Express bombings to the November 2008 Mumbai attacks, leading India to raise vigilance on its borders, reopen diplomatic channels, and rebuild stability in the region.[12]

Clashes escalated in 2016, with an attack on an Indian Army base in Uri, prompting India to conduct surgical strikes along the LoC. A suicide attack by a Pakistani group (Pulwama F) in February, 2019 triggered Indian airstrikes on Balakot.

In April of 2025, the Pahalgam terrorist attack killed 26 civilians. This led to a strong Indian response: India suspended the Indus Waters Treaty, lost the Attari–Wagah Border, suspended visa concessions, expelled diplomatic advisers, and lowered high commissions. Pakistan responded by suspending the Simla Agreement, locking trade, and closing its airspace. Then, on May 7, India undertook Operation Sindoor (attacks on nine suspected terrorist training camps in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied Kashmir) to destroy militant infrastructure.[13] Pakistan then formed an "Army Rocket Force" to more effectively command its missile force in conventional warfare.

India supplemented its military response with Operation Abhyaas, a nationwide simulated civil-defense drill on 7 May 2025 in 244 districts to rehearse air-raid warning sirens, blackouts, evacuations, and public emergency readiness.[14] Additionally, Operation Mahadev in July 2025 led to the killing of three top-tier militants, Suleiman of The Resistance Front, who was identified as the primary mastermind behind the Pahalgam attack; the United States later formally designated TRF as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.[15]

This range of conflict (wars, terrorism, strategic militarization, and nuclear brinkmanship) highlights the enduring nature of India–Pakistan tensions, all deeply embedded within the long-standing Kashmir question. It is critical to address this concern now due to the new concerns regarding water-sharing tensions, cross-border terror, and geopolitical competition.

Kashmir Conflict
Ever since the Indian-Pakistan Partition, the region of Kashmir (in Northern India) has been faced with significant tension. After the partition, the Hindu ruler of the Muslim region of Kashmir accepted being a part of India to fight off Pakistani militant groups.

https://www.britannica.com/event/Tashkent-Agreement. Accessed 4 October 2025.
[8] Strahorn, Erica A. "The Bangladesh Liberation War." *Ohio State University*, origins.osu.edu/milestones/bangladesh-liberation-war
[9] Teekah, Ethan. "Simla Agreement". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 19 Jul. 2025, https://www.britannica.com/topic/Simla-Agreement. Accessed 4 October 2025.
[10] The Editors of Encyclopaedia Britannica. "Kargil War". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 31 Jul. 2025, https://www.britannica.com/event/Kargil-War. Accessed 4 October 2025.
[11] Raasheed, Maryam. "From Pokhran to Chagai: The Nuclear Tests That Reshaped South Asia." *Strategic Vision Institute*, thesvi.org/from-pokhran-to-chagai-the-nuclear-tests-that-reshaped-south-asia/.
[12] D'Souza, Shanthie Mariet. "Mumbai terrorist attacks of 2008". *Encyclopedia Britannica*, 6 Sep. 2025, https://www.britannica.com/event/Mumbai-terrorist-attacks-of-2008. Accessed 4 October 2025.

[13] "Operation Sindoor: Forging One Force." *Press Information Bureau of India*, www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2129453.
[14] "Civil Defense Mock Exercise Conducted in South Goa." *Press Information Bureau of India*, www.pib.gov.in/PressReleasePage.aspx?PRID=2127665.
[15] Rubio, Mark. "Terrorist Designation of the Resistance Front." *U.S. Department of State*, 17 July 2025, www.state.gov/releases/office-of-the-spokesperson/2025/07/terrorist-designation-of-the-resistance-front#:~:text=Press%20Statement, publication%20in%20the%20Federal%20Register.

Since then, the United Nations has established the LoC, splitting Kashmir, which has divided the region between the two nations. Furthermore, the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) was established to monitor the region for dangerous developments, including ceasefire violations[16]. A future referendum on the status of Kashmir was promised, yet none occurred. During the Cold War, tensions continued to escalate, especially once the United States aligned with Pakistan and the Soviet Union sided with India[17]. Both Pakistan and India wanted control of Kashmir for very different reasons; Pakistan desired to control Kashmir because of its Muslim majority. On the other hand, India desired to control it to demonstrate the secular nature of the nation.

In 2019, India revoked Article 370 in its constitution; this article granted significant autonomy to the Jammu and Kashmir regions[18]. Due to this revocation, the constitution and flag of the Jammu and Kashmir region were removed. Indians who didn't live in this region were allowed to buy land from it[19]. The increasing insurgency led to a rise in militarization.

In May of 2025, a ceasefire was violated along the line of control by Pakistan through artillery fire, to which India responded with air and drone strikes[20]. This occurred shortly after the terrorist attack known as Operation Sindoor. Despite a reimplemented U.S.-led ceasefire between the two nations, Pakistan violated the ceasefire (in August 2025) with unprovoked small arms fire in the Poonch District[21], a divided region between India and Pakistan. India also retaliated against this attack.
In late 2025, more violations of the ceasefire were reported. As cross-border militancy arises, tensions between the two nations approach a climax in which

both nations are considering new ways to implement mass destruction. India and Pakistan are on the verge of nuclear warfare as traditional methods are deemed obsolete in this fight for dominance. With this in mind, more Kashmiri citizens fear displacement due to the increased militarization of the region[22].

Economically, the Kashmir region is suffering as sanctions and trade blockades are implemented[23]. Tourism, a major source of income, continues to decline[24], and citizens are placed under extreme restrictions barring their movement[25]. With these restrictions also come difficulty for Kashmiri residents to attain food, education, and healthcare.

Questions To Consider:
1) How do the governments of India and Pakistan respond to the possibility and implications of "mass destruction" and nuclear brinkmanship?
2) How do the governments of India and Pakistan respond to counterterrorism as a method to retaliate against ceasefire violations?
3) How are people living in the Kashmir region impacted by the possibility of mass violence?
4) How can the UNSC respond to the lack of food, healthcare access, transportation, and education as a result of ceasefire violations?

Key Terms:
Infected firmware:
Malicious software infecting a software's core functions
Legacy Backed Up Servers:
Outdated software/hardware that is not up-to-date with modern technologies
SCADA Infrastructure:

[16] United Nations. "United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP)." *United Nations Peacekeeping*, www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmogip
[17] Council on Foreign Relations. "India-Pakistan Conflict." *CFR Backgrounder*, 2022, www.cfr.org/backgrounder/india-pakistan-conflict
[18] BBC News. "Article 370: What Happened with Kashmir and Why It Matters." *BBC News*, 5 Aug 2019, www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-india-49234708
[19] Reuters. "India Opens Kashmir Land to Outsiders as It Reinforces Control." *Reuters*, 27 Oct 2020, www.reuters.com/article/us-india-kashmir-land-idUSKBN27C1KQ
[20] India Today. "Pakistan Violates Border Ceasefire for 10th Day, Army Responds." *India Today*, 4 May 2025, www.indiatoday.in/india/story/pakistan-violates-border-ceasefire-for-10th-day-army-responds-pahalgam-attack-2719224-2025-05-04
[21] Al Jazeera. "Pakistan Violates Ceasefire Again in Poonch as U.S.-Led Truce Falters." *Al Jazeera*, 22 Aug 2025, www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/8/22/pakistan-violates-ceasefire-poonch-us-led-truce-falters

[22] Al Jazeera. "'Who Suffered the Most?': Fear and Fatigue in Kashmir After Ceasefire." *Al Jazeera*, 12 May 2025, www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/5/12/we-want-permanent-solution-fear-and-fatigue-in-kashmir-after-ceasefire
[23] Kronstadt, K. Alan. "Kashmir: Background, Recent Developments, and U.S. Policy." *Congressional Research Service Report R45877*, 13 Jan. 2020, www.congress.gov/crs_external_products/R/PDF/R45877/R45877.6.pdf
[24] Reuters. "Kashmir prepares for tourism 'long lull' as war cries ring loud." *Reuters*, 5 May 2025, www.reuters.com/world/india/kashmir-prepares-tourism-long-lull-war-cries-ring-loud-2025-05-06/
[25] Human Rights Watch. "Restrictions, Detentions Persist in Kashmir." *Human Rights Watch*, 7 Oct. 2019, www.hrw.org/news/2019/10/07/restrictions-detentions-persist-kashmir

Technology used to monitor industrial processes and infrastructure

Conclusion
The Sino-Indo-Pakistani Border is one of the most contested ones in Asia's history, sparked by geopolitical warfare and religious differences that exist between these nations. As tensions emerge in South Asia, it is the job of the United Nations Security Council to develop solutions to the constant crises that emerge in this tense area and help the region move toward multilateralist policies.